

Picking Up the Pieces

Divorce

Divorce happens. It's not supposed to happen, but it happens. The good news is that the divorce rate has recently been falling. The bad news is that fewer people "believe" in marriage anymore, so as goes the marriage rate, so goes the divorce rate. Still, when it happens to you, it can be devastating. All the hopes and dreams of what could have been are suddenly gone. And whether you're the one who decided to opt out or the one who lost out, the ache goes deep. Add to that the guilt and shame that creeps up on you if you dare show your face at church again it's no wonder it's difficult to pick up the pieces when this tragedy strikes.

Malachi 2:13-16

1. Divorce is not the _____ sin.
2. Divorce is a trauma that affects people _____, _____, _____, and _____.
3. Grief: _____ and talk about it.
4. Anger: _____ with it appropriately.
5. Guilt: Guilt is _____. Examine yourself _____. Seek healthy _____. Be _____. _____ and be _____.
6. Loneliness: Do not _____. Do not seek a _____. Seek _____ company.
7. Fear: _____ it. _____ it. Seek _____ counsel. Spend serious time in _____ and _____.
8. The Church's response to divorce: _____, _____, and _____.

My Count Me In! Commitments

- I'll be here next Sunday
- I'll invite a friend
- Pre-Married? Evaluate well (don't get in a hurry) ... have the faith talk
- Married? Invest in your spouse. Go on a real date this week
- Divorced? Divorcing? Invest in your faith and build relationships with your church ... attend a small group (Celebrate Recovery coming soon)

Digging Deeper, Going Further

Picking Up the Pieces When Tragedy Strikes: Divorce

Scripture: Malachi 2:13–16

Introduction: Divorce was never in anybody's plans. Marriages are supposed to last forever, but alas that's not true for about half of everybody who walks into church. It's not the way it's supposed to be, it's just the way it is. Every broken marriage is a tragedy for everybody who's touched by the break. So often, though, the tragedy is compounded by the way we respond ...

1. Read Ezra 10:1–4. Ezra was upset that some of the Israelites had married "foreign women." What was the people's response?
2. Read Nehemiah 13:23–27. How did Nehemiah respond to those who had married "foreign women"?
3. How was Ezra's and Nehemiah's responses similar? How were the results different?
4. Read Malachi 2:13–16. Malachi was a prophet in Judah during Nehemiah's time. The words in this passage address Nehemiah's response to those he was berating. How would you characterize Malachi's response?
5. Dr. Bill suggested that historically the church has vilified divorce, at times treating it as an unforgivable sin. How has this helped the church? How has it hurt the church?
6. When divorce happens, what can the church do to love and support those whose marriage has broken?
7. What advice would you offer someone whose marriage had failed?

***Next Week: Picking Up the Pieces When Tragedy Strikes—Addiction
Who will you be inviting to worship with you this week?***